

R-CATS – Ripley County Alternative to Suspension



Ripley County is Making it Happen!



WE ARE

The four public school corporations in Ripley County: Batesville, Jac-Cen-Del, Milan and South Ripley. We partnered with the Ripley County Probation Department and Circuit Court Judge to create a county-wide alternative to suspension program. Our program also has the support of the Ripley County Prosecutor.

OUR STUDENTS & FAMILIES

Our families needed a place for students to attend when they were assigned to a short term out-of-school suspension. Due to the fact that many parents are working during the day, suspended students were frequently left unsupervised. Additionally, suspended students would frequently fall behind on their schoolwork during suspension.

OUR STAFF

The R-CATS program is run under the supervision of one classified staff member who communicates with teachers to gather student work and collaborates with the probation department on community service locations.

OUR PROMISING PRACTICE

The R-CATS program is an alternative to short term out-of-school suspension. Any Ripley County student committing an infraction that would typically result in a suspension of 10 days or less is assigned to attend R-CATS. Students are required to complete schoolwork in the mornings for the opportunity to receive full credit. After lunch students perform community service activities at locations established by the Ripley County probation department. This allows all students to be supervised during out-of-school suspension and also allows them to keep up with schoolwork so they do not suffer an academic consequence. Failure to attend or behave in R-CATS can trigger the involvement of the probation department and ultimately the Circuit Court Judge. This program represents a true collaboration between the four school systems and the juvenile justice system.

OUR STEPS

Multiple planning meetings were held with the Ripley County Superintendents, Chief Probation Officer and Circuit Court Judge. We made visits to a similar program in a neighboring county to talk to those involved with the creation of that program. We sought funding for the program through various sources. The Probation Department secured the facility location and obtained a grant from the Tyson Fund to cover the costs. The superintendents submitted a joint grant to the Rising Sun Regional Foundation for start up costs of the program. Memorandums of Understanding were developed and approved by all four school boards so that the program could be up and running in January 2016. The program is off to a great start.

IN OUR OWN WORDS

"The collaborators have designed the R-CATS program to benefit the schools, students, student families and the Ripley County community. It is a highly reformatory and productive program that requires the students to "give back" by performing community service for non-profit organizations." Shannon Schmaltz, Chief Probation Officer

"The R-CATS program represents a tremendous collaborative effort between the schools and juvenile justice system, and will prove to be an extremely positive program." Rob Moorhead South Ripley Superintendent

For more information about our school or corporation, email: rmoorhead@sripley.k12.in.us
or visit our website: www.sripley.k12.in.us